



BILL NO: Senate Bill 134
TITLE: Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission - Training Requirements - Electronic Stalking
COMMITTEE: Judicial Proceedings Committee
HEARING DATE: February 1, 2022
POSITION: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

The Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (MNADV) is the state domestic violence coalition that brings together victim service providers, allied professionals, and concerned individuals for the common purpose of reducing intimate partner and family violence and its harmful effects on our citizens. **MNADV urges the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee to issue a favorable report with amendments SB 134.**

According to the CDC, 7.5 million people are stalked each year with women ages 18-24 experiencing the highest rate of stalking.¹ Current or former intimate partners are responsible for stalking 61% of female victims and 44% of male victims and 90% of stalking incidents are committed by someone that the victim knows.² In a recent report studying the impact of technology abuse in the context of domestic violence during the pandemic researchers found an increase in every type of tech abuse including harassment and monitoring or surveillance.³ Stalking is often a precursor to femicide. Studies show that 76% of women murdered by an intimate partner were stalked.⁴

It is crucial that all law enforcement officers be trained and are knowledgeable about Maryland's stalking laws and the most current methods of stalking including electronic means. Since these methods continue to evolve as new technologies emerge training should be included as a part of the 3-year in-service training. However, we also recognize that documenting digital evidence can be a specialized field requiring specific knowledge and expertise and that Maryland law enforcement agencies have officers with that unique knowledge and expertise. MNADV prioritizes the training for law enforcement on identifying that digital evidence exists and

¹ https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs_report2010-a.pdf

² *Id.*

³ https://static1.squarespace.com/static/51dc541ce4b03ebab8c5c88c/t/61674c082419497a370af990/1634159630368/2021_T2E+Needs+Assessment+Report.pdf

⁴ https://assets.speakcdn.com/assets/2497/domestic_violence_and_stalking_ncadv.pdf



preserving it for those officers with specialized training to document. MNADV suggests striking the word “document” on page 2, line 11 and inserting the words “identify and preserve.”

For the above stated reasons, the **Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence** urges a **favorable report with amendments on SB 134.**